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SOURCE Ogonek, No 39, 1950.SURVEYING STARTS ON MAIN TURKMEN CANAL

V. S. Eristov

The Main Turkmen Canal, 1,100 kilometers long, will be one of the largest canals in the world. It is distinguished also by the complexity and peculiarity of the construction operations.

On the construction of the Main Turkmen Canal, which will be completed in 1957, it is planned to move about 300 million cubic meters of earth, and a similar volume of earth-moving will be done in constructing the irrigation system.

It is necessary to note that construction workers will meet special difficulties. For many hundreds of kilometers the canal will run in the desert, far from populated points. The broiling sun, lack of water, and drifting sands all make serious demands on the organization of operations.

Operations will be begun first on the head sector. At Takhia-Tash, not far from the town of Nukus, the bed of the Amu-Dar'ya River will be partitioned by a concrete dam, and water from the reservoir which will be formed here will go into the canal branching off from the river toward the west. As is known, the waters of the Amu-Dar'ya carry many deposits along the bed and in suspension, and to prevent the canal from becoming choked, washing platforms and settling installations will be built at the point where the canal branches off.

It is intended to cut through the canal by the so-called pioneer method, in which a narrow channel is cut for several kilometers, filled with water, and then widened and deepened to the dimensions called for by the plan by using suction dredges. While the dredges are working on one sector, the dry-land excavators work on the next. To prevent the channel from becoming choked with drifting sand, the banks are planted with haloxylon. Water for the plantings will be provided by pumping installations along the whole length of the canal.

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As is known, the canal will run along the Uzboy, the ancient bed of the Amu-Dar'ya. In places this natural excavation attains a width of several tens of meters. To maintain the necessary depths, there will be created in the Uzboy two reservoirs, located 40-100 kilometers from the Ashkhabad Railroad. A large construction base will be set up not far from the railroad. Construction has begun on railroad lines and automobile roads leading from the railroad to the future construction areas.

The construction area of the head installation at Takhia-Tash will be connected with the new railroad being built parallel to the Amu-Dar'ya. Hundreds of kilometers of surfaced and dirt roads will be built in the Kara-Kum Desert.

The construction project will be supplied with electric power by using trains carrying power equipment. Local electric power resources, especially wind power, also will be widely used. Power transmission lines also will be constructed from the industrial centers of Turkmenia to the work areas. After completion of the construction, these lines will be used to transmit power from the hydroelectric stations of the canal to the industrial centers of the republic.

All construction operations will be mechanized to a maximum. In addition, concrete plants will be set up along the canal.

At present, surveying work is being undertaken on the line. Geologists, hydrogeologists, meteorologists, agronomists, and soil specialists are being sent into the Amu-Dar'ya basin and the Kara-Kum Desert.

[See map on following page]

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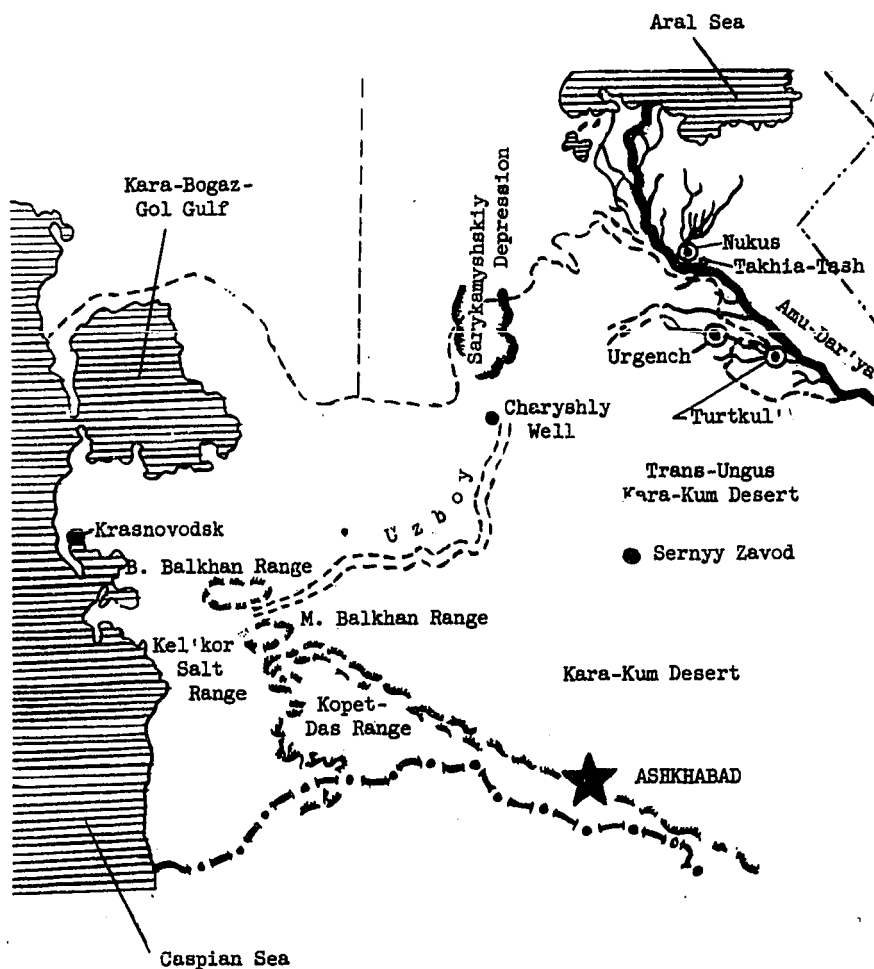
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